

COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC/PUBLIC SAFETY

October 23, 2001

6:00 PM

Chairman Sysyn called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Sysyn, Vaillancourt, Pariseau, Hirschmann, Lopez

Messrs: C. Williams, T. Lolicata, R. Ludwig, W. Robinson, Lt. Lussier,
M. Slagle, S. Lewry, D. Waldecker, B. Fortin, J. Karp, H. Jordan

TABLED ITEM

Communication from Mr. George Upham requesting to address the committee regarding reconsideration of 3 hour handicapped parking to 6 hours.

On motion of Alderman Vaillancourt, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to remove this item from the table.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated before you start discussing this item, the Clerk would note that we had requested an interpreter to be here and I would ask if the interpreter is here. Secondly, we did receive an e-mail from Mr. Upham who could not be here this evening and I will distribute a copy to members of the Committee. Mr. Upham had requested that Alderman Vaillancourt address the Committee in his absence.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated Mr. Upham lives on Bodwell Road and he has contacted me several times regarding this and I have tried to explain to him the motivation behind doing this. As you may recall when we initiated this I had some questions at the time with the thrust being to make sure this wasn't disadvantageous to any disabled people. This has come around a couple of times now. This is where we kept the 24 hours, 7 days a week parking for disabled only at the disabled meters and took the amount down on other meters to three hours.

Mr. Lolicata stated at all meters, whether they are 10 or 2 hour, they can only park for three hours.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated Mr. Upham believes that this is not a good signal to send. He believes that this means the City is not friendly to the disabled and he

requests that we reconsider doing this. I tried to explain to him that I think the motivation behind doing this was to make these spaces available on a more ready basis for everybody, including other disabled people. I believe there are some members from the community here who wish to speak so I yield to them.

Ms. Carol Williams stated I think I expressed my opinion about a year and a half ago regarding this issue and two hours certainly is not adequate and then we went to three hours. At that time actually I was not happy with any limit but I understood it for the downtown area and wanted four hours myself at that time but we came to a compromise. It was between two and four hours and we came up with three. I think four is adequate. I think for some of us though when I talk to Mr. Upham and others who use either manual wheelchairs or walkers or canes for walking they walk slower than I do. I can go at a pretty fast clip. For those people it does take a lot more time so four hours doesn't seem too extensive.

Alderman Lopez stated I sit on the Access Manchester Committee. Is Maureen here? I think she probably wants to make a comment because he appeared before the Committee and made some comments and we didn't know what the answer would be. Maybe Maureen has researched it and there is a recommendation from the Committee.

Ms. Slagle replied I actually polled the Committee and the consensus was to recommend increasing the time to four hours. That extra hour will give folks with severe mobility impairments extra time to navigate the streets, especially when there is snow and ice on the sidewalks which slows down mobility even more so. That extra hour will allow more time to conduct business and get to and from their vehicle.

Chairman Sysyn asked Tom Lolicata if there was handicapped parking in the garages.

Mr. Lolicata answered we have plenty and they are not being used.

Chairman Sysyn asked so they can park there all day.

Mr. Lolicata answered yes they can. They can also park all day still in the handicapped areas on Elm Street. This was done for meters only because of the abuse.

Ms. Williams stated the issue regarding the garages is that for people who use walkers, canes and manual wheelchairs it is a longer distance to get to Elm Street from say Victory or Canal or even the Hartnett Lot. It is a longer distance than if

they park right on Elm Street as you can imagine. I think that is one reason why they don't use the garages. That was a comment that was made to me.

Alderman Levasseur stated the reason why at Home Depot and the Mall that they put the handicapped parking spaces in the front next to the doorway is because people...otherwise they would stick the handicapped spaces at the farthest end of the parking lot if that was the way to do it. The way we had it before we changed it was working well. A couple of people complained because people parked there all day but they were handicapped people who worked downtown at some of these businesses. We had a couple of people complain. You can see by what we have now that people are complaining more. Obviously, it is not working. I think we should go back to the original plan. A couple of people were upset, but not as much as there is now. There is a reason why they aren't going to go in the garages. If you park in the garage and you have to wheel all the way down to the Verizon Center with ice and snow whatever, that is not going to work. The original plan, although it wasn't perfect, is better than the one we have. I would just ask that you put it back to the original way.

Ms. Williams stated there is an ordinance by the way for employers to accommodate workers who need particular parking. That is an accommodation that is supposed to be provided by the employer so even though there were people complaining about and I will be specific, in front of the Nynex Building, which is the one that I heard about the most, they did work in there and they did have a legitimate reason to park there. However, 10 hours parking in one spot left little time for other people and that was the primary complaint on Elm Street. It is not the City's responsibility, it is the employer's responsibility to provide parking.

Chairman Sysyn stated that came up at one of our meetings, I believe, when we asked Verizon if they would put handicapped parking in their garage and they don't have it.

Alderman Pariseau moved to increase handicapped parking at meters from three hours to four hours. Alderman Lopez duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Hirschmann stated Carol Williams makes a good point. Four hours was the time she felt was acceptable. As far as the cost, Tom, do you have to go and retag all of the meters in the City? How much is that going to cost us?

Mr. Lolicata replied there is going to be a cost factor and a time factor. It is going to take a few weeks.

Alderman Hirschmann asked how many meters do you have to retag.

Mr. Lolicata answered roughly 2,000.

Alderman Levasseur asked before we changed it to three hours for every meter we didn't have it that you could go to a meter and then...is that how it was for every meter. I thought it was designated.

Mr. Lolicata answered this was strictly for metered parking only. That is all it was.

Alderman Levasseur prior to changing it and putting a sticker on every meter was there a sticker on the meter.

Mr. Lolicata answered no because they could park there all day. That is why this was done.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated I asked Mr. Upham what he would be happy with and he agreed with Alderman Levasseur that he would like to go back to the other way. I told him that I didn't think that would probably be the sentiment of the Committee so I asked him if there was any compromise he would be happy with and he said that he would be happy with five hours. I told him I would make the motion for four hours thinking that was all we could get. I would prefer five but I guess I will vote for four.

Ms. Williams replied I disagree with five only because I think it is really difficult for people to park downtown and if I can park in one space for five hours, that is a long time.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated well I promised to express his position and I have done that.

Chairman Sysyn called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Sysyn stated we are going to take up Item 6 now.

Communication and pictures from Mark E. Cardin regarding the Pearl Street Parking Lot.

Chairman Sysyn stated he has been at my pushcart and he has talked to Joe Levasseur about the pictures. A lot of the mess is from the bars I think.

Mr. Lolicata replied we clean that area twice a week. That is our biggest problem with Charley Peppers and the rest of the bars. We do it on Friday and we do it

again on Monday morning. It came to the point where we now have eight to ten barrels in that parking lot for these people to hopefully drop their litter in. It takes a crew of men to do all of the parking lots and Pearl Street is one of the worst. For somebody to make a comment that they saw our men working in there for 45 seconds I take offense to. They go in there every single week. Sometimes on Friday and always on Monday morning.

Chairman Sysyn asked who has been taking care of pulling the weeds.

Mr. Lolicata answered we don't have time for that maintenance. As a matter of fact we put stuff on the weeds to try and kill them. I cannot maintain all of these lots as far as cutting the grass and killing the weeds. I can't even finish my own work.

Mr. Ludwig stated when I was notified that I was going to be coming to this meeting I took a ride down to the lot to see what the issues were before I got the photos. I was unaware that we even had benches there. They are very old and must have been put in many, many years ago. The benches were in a state of disrepair and we fixed the benches so they are fine but just a comment about the weeds, if you remember during the budget process last year we were actually asked to take a look at expanding a weed program that we have down in the Millyard. As a result of the budget process and subsequent numbers coming through in the final budget that was actually shrunk. Instead of expanding the area to attack this weed program, which is really ugly out there, we actually took a step backwards and that was kind of unfortunate because to attack what we perceive to be very much a problem because they are just ugly we did take a step backwards. If Tom would like I could share with him some of the information we have about the people that we contract with to do some of that spraying and it is really effective. The bottom line is you have to keep doing it over and over and over. It just doesn't go away after one spraying.

Alderman Levasseur asked when you do your budget do you actually have a line item that specifically goes to the Alderman that identifies it as downtown weed and seed. I know we have seen weed and seed before. I know that is a program somewhere.

Mr. Wayne Robinson answered that is a grant that has nothing to do with this program.

Alderman Levasseur stated what I suggest is that you put that number and pull it out for the Alderman at budget time and say this is our plan because it is really bad and it has to be taken care of.

Alderman Lopez asked is this a joint effort or is it your responsibility, Tom, for the parking lots.

Mr. Lolicata answered it is my responsibility for the parking lots.

Alderman Lopez stated what I would recommend is that both of you and this could be referred to Bob MacKenzie so you could work on it for next year's CIP.

Mr. Ludwig stated I would like to comment on what Alderman Levasseur said. Again it is like anything else in your operational budget. It is not all that different from the School District. They ask for money and they go back and move their dollars around as they see appropriate. As a department head, we are forced to do that as well so I come back and do I eliminate life safety or numbers from a weed program. Those are the kind of issues that we are faced with when it comes to the operational part of your budget.

Alderman Pariseau moved to refer this to the CIP Committee for the FY03 budget. Alderman Vaillancourt duly seconded the motion.

Chairman Sysyn called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Sysyn addressed Items 4 and 5 of the agenda:

Discussion of prepaid parking in parking garages.

Communication from Stephanie Lewry, Intown Manchester, expressing disappointment in the outcome of the recent Traffic Committee meeting, which resulted in maintaining metered parking hours until 10 PM.

Alderman Lopez asked could we hear from Intown first.

Alderman Pariseau stated I think we already heard what Stephanie is going to say and I would just like to move to change the meters from 10 PM until 8 PM.

Chairman Sysyn replied but we have another document from Tom Lolicata, which will include all of that.

Alderman Pariseau asked have you read this.

Chairman Sysyn answered I am reading it now.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated I thought Tom was going to explain it for us.

Chairman Sysyn stated we will let Tom explain what he is doing first and then hear from Stephanie.

Mr. Lolicata stated this whole thing was brought up at the last meeting and you asked me to do something about it. This came up because of all of the complaints from the constituents, Intown, the Chamber of Commerce and the Aldermen. Basically everyone had something to say about this. We addressed it one or two times and I heard a lot of people as well as my own people and people like Dave Waldecker. We took all the information and tried to get to the heart of the matter. If we can go through this one by one I will show you what I am getting at. The first thing we noticed ourselves because of a study by Mr. Jeff Karp of the Center of NH based upon what he was saying we would be better off charging \$10 at the Center instead of \$12. My biggest reason was we wouldn't have to worry about giving out change to all of these people. We can work with fives and tens and even numbers. Jeff, who deals with Boston and Hartford and other places said \$10 would be the perfect price for this area.

Alderman Pariseau stated I don't understand why we are proposing the change just because people can't count.

Mr. Lolicata replied it is not the idea of counting it is the idea of getting change back.

Chairman Sysyn stated it would take them forever.

Alderman Pariseau stated they give you \$15, you give them \$3. They give you \$20; you give them \$8.

Mr. Lolicata replied this also has to do with the study. We are trying to make it easier for everybody.

Alderman Pariseau asked have you come up with a financial statement that shows the losses that we anticipate in revenues.

Mr. Lolicata answered we are anticipating an increase by going to \$10 because of volume. We based it on \$12 and we are going to drop it to \$10 but you are going to make up for it in volume. People will pay \$10 to park there.

Alderman Pariseau asked are they going to prepay.

Chairman Sysyn answered they are prepaid already.

Alderman Pariseau stated I have been advised that the Center of New Hampshire will be charging \$35 for parking on event nights. That is what I was told.

Mr. Lolicata asked how can they charge \$35.

Alderman Pariseau answered they are their spaces. They have 600 spaces. The City only has 400.

Mr. Lolicata stated they will charge the same price as the City. It is still a municipal garage.

Alderman Pariseau stated people from Barrington, NH called the Center of New Hampshire and asked what the parking rate would be for them to watch a hockey game at the Verizon Wireless Arena and they were told \$35.

Mr. Lolicata replied I have never heard of that.

Alderman Pariseau stated my question was going to be how are we going to differentiate between the garage's parking spaces and the City's parking spaces.

Mr. Lolicata replied Jeff can probably help me answer that. With the equipment we are going to get we are going to distinguish the 400 spaces and we are in negotiations with them right now. We have 400 right now and the Center has 600.

Alderman Pariseau asked Mr. Karp are you planning on going to \$35 a space.

Mr. Jeff Karp answered no that is not our intention.

Alderman Pariseau asked so you would go with the \$10 that the City is considering.

Mr. Karp answered our particular view is given where this marketplace is and if you are looking at the Verizon Wireless Arena to be an engine to revitalize your downtown, \$12 is not appropriate. The feeling is from the parking study that you can always go up but you can't go down. Once someone drives by that garage and it is full or they are offended their parking preferences change and they go somewhere else. We operate in cities like Springfield and Hartford that are probably in comparison to this market that have minor league hockey and quite frankly the market is \$7 to \$8. This is a little different because of its closeness to the Verizon Arena but I think \$12...the worst case scenario is I would hate to be sitting there with 600 empty spaces because you have the price too high. I think \$10 is very appropriate.

Mr. Lolicata stated that is why we talked to the experts before coming up with this proposal.

Alderman Hirschmann asked can we take a motion on each item.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated I am reading this and it says this will allow easier change making and now I am hearing a different argument. If your sole argument is that it will allow easier change making, I am not for that. I think you can make change easily enough.

Mr. Lolicata stated that is not the only reason. That is why I asked Jeff to be here tonight.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated I also don't agree with you that by lowering it from \$12 to \$10 you are actually going to make more because more people are going to park there. I think the Mayor's aide budgeted in that figure that I thought was inflated when we passed the budget in the spring, based on \$12.

Mr. Robinson replied originally the Mayor's budget was based on \$15 but the reason it was done at \$15 was prior to the Center's solution to handle the parking problem, because it is a mixed use garage our initial thought was to charge a higher fee so that people basically wouldn't park there.

Alderman Vaillancourt responded so now we have come down from \$15 to \$10 so we have knocked off 1/3 of your projected revenues.

Mr. Robinson stated the final budget was based on \$12.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked how much have we knocked off going from \$12 to \$10 according to your budget if we had the same number of people parking there.

Mr. Robinson answered it wasn't really based on the number of cars, it was based on the number of events. Well, there was a number of cars...

Alderman Vaillancourt interjected there was a formula. We ought to be able to do the math and find out how much we are going to lose based on this and I do think we are going to lose \$2 per car.

Mr. Robinson stated but we also based it on 75 events and if you go over 75 events that we will make it up that way.

Mr. Lolicata stated we also had another factor in there and that is the amount of box seats and what we are going to end up with as a number there. They are

entitled to parking and we don't yet know what that number is going to be. Whatever it is, it is going to be in our favor anyway. There is a magic number. They can't go over 135.

Alderman Hirschmann stated I am comfortable going with the lower rate. When we visited South Carolina, I think they were charging \$7 or \$8. They had a lot of merchants participating in private lots. I think \$10 is wise.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated but this is not just for hockey games, this is for any event.

On motion of Alderman Hirschmann, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to set the parking rate for the Center of New Hampshire garage at \$10 for civic center events.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated I just want to note that I think we are going to lose revenue on this and as long as it is not for the stated reason of change making I can go along with it.

Mr. Lolicata addressed Item B of his proposal. Parking meter time limits was the biggest problem of everybody downtown. I want to drop back to 8 AM until 8 PM.

Alderman Pariseau moved to set the time for the parking meters from 8 AM until 8 PM.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked so this means that anything after 8 PM is totally free.

Mr. Lolicata answered we were going to 10 PM but everybody was complaining so we compromised and came up with 8 PM.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated you are not going to tell me that you are not going to lose money here.

Mr. Lolicata replied we are not going to lose money. We have been adding meters on the South end.

Alderman Vaillancourt responded I understand that but the point is that for every meter that you lower the time by two hours you are going to lose \$1. With the added meters you could have had extra but now you are not going to have extra.

Mr. Robinson stated what you are all forgetting is that with enforcement you are going to be saving two hours worth of salary. This should offset the lost revenue.

Chairman Sysyn stated while you are going to vote on this, I want to introduce Item 7 because I think this will take care of their problem at the Institute of Art.

Communication from Lisa Calabro asking the Committee to reconsider the evening and weekend parking plan.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated this relates to Item B of Tom's proposal. It is relating to the parking meter time limits. There are 150 letters that have been submitted by members of the NH Institute of Arts who take classes there in the evenings. They also are commenting in this communication that the 6 PM to 10 PM and having to move their cars around during the classes was going to be imposing a bigger difficulty. It was bad enough they had to feed the meter but to have to start moving cars around during classes was going to be an added burden. I just wanted to note that for the record.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked you have 150 different letters.

Deputy Clerk Johnson answered I have 150 letters and apparently there are 800 people taking classes.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked are they worded differently or the same.

Deputy Clerk Johnson answered the same wording.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated so it is like a petition.

Chairman Sysyn called for a vote on Item B of Tom's proposal. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to receive and file Item 7.

Mr. Lolicata addressed Item C, Sunday parking fees for parking garages and parking lots during civic center events. It is proposed that Canal and Victory garages and City parking lots only charge the regular charge by ordinance on Sundays. In other words, there is no charge presently on Sunday.

Alderman Pariseau asked is it \$5 or \$10.

Mr. Lolicata answered we have it by ordinance now. It is \$10 for the Center and \$5 in the Canal and Victory garages.

Deputy Clerk Johnson asked so the Sunday will read on event days only.

Mr. Lolicata answered yes.

Alderman Vaillancourt moved to approve Item C. Alderman Pariseau duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Hirschmann asked before we vote can we hear from Intown.

Ms. Lewry stated on the Sunday only, Intown doesn't have opposition to that.

Chairman Sysyn asked are you okay with the parking meter limit at 8 PM.

Ms. Lewry asked would you like us to speak.

Chairman Sysyn answered that was one of your proposals in your letter.

Chairman Sysyn called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Mr. Lolicata addressed Item D of the proposal. We tried to do something for the retailers once again so we came up with free parking Monday through Friday after 6 PM at the Canal Street garage on non-civic center event nights. That gives them free parking on non-event nights. We propose free parking on Saturday and Sunday at the Canal Street garage on non-civic center event nights. We also propose, to help them out, free parking of up to two hours prior to a civic center event on Saturday or Sunday at the Canal Street garage. In other words, they can park...say there is something going on at 6 PM. They can park up until 4 PM and then we are going to start charging for the event that night. I think this will help.

Alderman Shea asked will you designate what nights there are civic center events because some people may not know.

Mr. Lolicata answered there will be signage on horses and illuminated and they won't be able to miss them.

Alderman Shea asked so people will know when they go to park.

Chairman Sysyn answered yes.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated I suppose we are not losing any revenue on this one either.

Mr. Lolicata replied we are not. We are saving money. It costs more for expenditures than there are cars. Right now you are averaging 4.3 cars in one garage and 1.4 in another.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked 1.4 cars.

Mr. Lolicata answered right and we can probably clean out one person down there.

Alderman Pariseau moved to approve Item D. Alderman Lopez duly seconded the motion.

Ms. Lewry stated we truly do appreciate the generous offer of free parking in the Canal Street garage. My question is what about event nights.

Chairman Sysyn replied we are going to get to that in the next item.

Ms. Lewry stated our concern is that free parking is definitely something that the downtown people will appreciate but we have other needs for parking in the Canal Street garage, especially but in other garages as well with non-profits who have a constituency that are neither downtown customers nor civic center customers.

Chairman Sysyn responded this should take care of the Y people. Is that who you are talking about?

Ms. Lewry stated I just wanted to be sure that if you are going to be passing something that we...

Chairman Sysyn interjected it should take care of the Y people because if they come in earlier then the event they will be able to park there for free.

Ms. Lewry replied but if they don't...

Chairman Sysyn interjected I don't think they will want to park there then.

Ms. Lewry stated this is another question as well. Will there also be validated or dual parking on those nights?

Mr. Lolicata replied what we are trying to do is keep validation parking until 6 PM. If there is an event that night, it will be up to 6 PM. We can validate up to 6 PM.

Ms. Lewry asked but if somebody wants to go to Margaritas at 7 PM they would have to pay \$5 to go into that garage.

Mr. Lolicata answered no.

Ms. Lewry stated my concern about going step by step is that I haven't read the whole proposal that you have in front of you and I am afraid to not speak soon enough before something gets passed. I would like very much to allow Hal Jordan to have something to say about the non-profits. I don't know where that would be the most appropriate.

Chairman Sysyn replied on the next item.

Chairman Sysyn called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Mr. Lolicata addressed Item E of the agenda. We have a validation program right now with the stickers and what we are proposing to do is keep the validation until 6 PM. The program right now is in the Canal and Victory garages. The stickers are being used right now. After 6 PM, the Canal garage will be free on non-civic center event nights. After 6 PM, Victory garage has a \$3 prepay system, which is in effect right now. After 6 PM you go in and you prepay \$3.

Deputy Clerk Johnson asked is this for civic center event nights also. I need to clarify this. The \$3 prepay for Victory garage is \$3 whether it is a civic center event night or not?

Mr. Lolicata answered no.

Deputy Clerk Johnson asked is this merely civic center event nights.

Mr. Lolicata answered after 6 PM this is for non-civic center nights. We are doing it now. They have to prepay \$3.

Alderman Lopez asked could you go over that again, Tom.

Mr. Lolicata stated we are going to keep the validation program that we have now until 6 PM in the garages.

Chairman Sysyn recognized Brian Fortin.

Mr. Fortin stated I am Chair of both the Downtown Retail Development Committee for Intown as well as the Retail Development Committee for the Chamber of Commerce. My fear is that 6 PM is not late enough for the downtown merchants. Most if not all of the downtown merchants open in the evening are

open until 8 PM. Someone coming in, for example, and wanting to go to George's Apparel for a suit at 7 PM or people who get out of work and want to go home and have dinner and then come back the 6 PM window is not late enough. I think it needs to be extended until 8 PM.

Alderman Lopez stated with the garage being free now on Canal Street you can park there all you want. The meters on the street will be for the businesses. There is a happy medium here isn't there?

Mr. Fortin replied when you say free Alderman Lopez that is on non-event nights. If we look at the event nights it is going to be mostly the same nights that we are open and trying to compete with that.

Alderman Pariseau stated I think the downtown merchants want everything for noting.

Mr. Fortin replied I disagree with that.

Alderman Lopez stated I think we are trying to find a happy medium here.

Mr. Fortin replied I think we have made a lot of compromises already.

Alderman Lopez stated I think Tom put this proposal together after listening to everybody. I don't know if he talked to you but he talked to Intown and apparently they are saying so far that things are okay. Now you have free parking in the Canal Street garage and that is an 800 car parking garage. That is going to free up the meters downtown for people to go to the restaurants or George's or anyplace else.

Mr. Fortin replied only on non-event nights.

Alderman Lopez stated on non-event nights or event nights. It doesn't make any difference. If they want to pay the 50 cents an hour in the meter they can still go down to George's and not go to the garage.

Mr. Fortin responded am I understanding correctly that on an event night there is no validation program.

Chairman Sysyn replied yes there is.

Mr. Fortin asked and it is still until 6 PM and businesses are open until 8 PM.

Mr. Lolicata answered after 6 PM there is no validation.

Alderman Pariseau asked what businesses are open until 8 PM.

Mr. Fortin answered I can list off a number of them. You have all the restaurants. There are a lot of retailers open on Thursday nights and we are trying to get more retailers to open on Thursday nights. That is what we are trying to do.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated they are not going to be using the garages. They can park at a meter.

Mr. Fortin stated but you are bumping the validation down to 6 PM.

Chairman Sysyn replied we had it to 6 PM forever. That is the way it is now.

Mr. Fortin stated we have been validating until 8 PM.

Mr. Lolicata asked why are we always talking about garages for parking downtown. What about all of the other spaces we have and the meters? People don't just go to garages downtown. They park everywhere.

Mr. Fortin stated we understand that but on event nights I guess we are anticipating the meters filling up first.

Mr. Lolicata replied why don't you give us a month to see what happens. We don't even know what is going to happen. We are trying to get something here on board...

Mr. Fortin interjected I guess we are trying to be proactive and trying to devise something that will work for all parties.

Mr. Lolicata stated you can only be so active and go so far. What I would like to do is see how this is going to work out.

Mr. Fortin replied well I think the businesses downtown have made more than enough sacrifices so far and this is going to be just another one.

Mr. Lolicata asked would you agree that we should try and see what happens during the first month and then you can come back to the table with your concerns. Does that make sense to you?

Mr. Fortin answered to some extent. I have been asked to speak on behalf of a number of businesses. We have, without exaggeration, six or seven focus groups from businesses ranging from professional offices down at the Center of NH to

legal firms to restaurants to retailers. They have all expressed a concern about a number of these items. As far as sacrifices we have made, we are paying meters in the evenings when we haven't been paying. Our daily rates have gone up almost double on the parking garages by going to a flat 50 cents an hour. These are all sacrifices that businesses have made downtown. We are paying meters on Saturdays now.

Mr. Lolicata replied you have paid on Saturdays for years up until about five or six years ago.

Chairman Sysyn stated in fact some people are paying now thinking that it is enforced.

Mr. Fortin stated there are a number of businesses open after 6 PM and basically what you are doing is telling the businesses that...

Chairman Sysyn interjected that is the way it is now. Somebody gave you a special thing at Canal Street probably by letting you do it until 8 PM but I think the ordinance is validation until 6 PM.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated technically there is no program for validation. There was no provision prior to now other than they pay the same rate as what the garage is charging. If the rate was 50 cents an hour, then the...the only validation allowed according to the policy established by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen was that 50 cents an hour had to be received. Now if that was in a validation form that is fine and I understand that a different program was put into effect but that never passed through the Board.

Chairman Sysyn stated but I think it passed the Traffic Committee because I bought parking stickers right after that.

Deputy Clerk Johnson replied we could not find an action of the Board regarding that and the Committee doesn't have the ability to do that.

Alderman Lopez stated a lot of things have been going on without being on the books and that is what Carol is saying. Now we will have it on the books and if a problem arises you will have an opportunity to present it back to the Traffic Committee. We made a basic plan before in this Committee and I approved it as an Alderman. Now all of these other problems surfaced and now we are trying to solve those problems. As we go along if something happens...

Chairman Sysyn asked, David, because we are doing the validation was it your understanding that it was until 6 PM.

Mr. Waldecker answered no.

Chairman Sysyn asked it was good until what time.

Mr. Waldecker answered until we close.

Mr. Fortin asked when you say there is no validation is there at least a plan for exit pay after 6 PM.

Chairman Sysyn replied when you go to the validation they will get a different ticket and they will bring it to you. I guess that is the way David is planning to do it.

Mr. Fortin asked if somebody is going into the garage at 6:30 PM to shop, are they paying the civic center rate of \$5 or \$7 or will they get a ticket.

Mr. Lolicata answered they will take a ticket.

Mr. Fortin asked and that doesn't stop at 6 PM.

Mr. Lolicata answered right now the validation program is going to stop at 6 PM.

Mr. Fortin asked what about the dual rate system. If they go in at 7 PM to visit someone...

Mr. Lolicata interjected we would have to talk to Carol on that one.

Mr. Robinson stated may I make a suggestion. We are talking about validation but in order for a validation program to be successful you are going to have to have a large number of businesses take advantage of it. We don't know how many people want to take advantage of it. It may be appropriate to have Intown or the Chamber survey the businesses and see if they would be willing to take advantage of this program because if they do it is going to cost them. This isn't a give away. I think before a validation program is approved or not approved we need to know how many businesses are willing to do it. I have been told, for example, people talk about Margaritas. Margaritas doesn't want to do it.

Mr. Fortin stated but if someone goes to after 6 PM can they at least pay the hourly rate in the garage.

Chairman Sysyn replied I think you are going to have to set it one way or the other. I just want to say that when I go to Margaritas after 6 PM it costs me \$3 to park in a garage.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated the question would be whether or not in the first instance a dual program can be instituted by the garage. In other words if you had a prepay system and somebody came in and said I am going to wherever and I want to be able to take a ticket, can they do both? How long are you going to have somebody in the both to collect that money?

Mr. Waldecker stated we do that currently.

Deputy Clerk Johnson asked so on a prepay it wouldn't matter.

Mr. Waldecker answered we try to accommodate everyone.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated so in reality what Mr. Waldecker is stating is that you could continue the same validation program you have now. We could just put it in writing and keep that as your policy and try it and see how it goes and still do prepay for everybody else going in on an event night. You would have to figure out a time.

Mr. Robinson stated you have to remember that if you do a dual rate system, the establishment has to take advantage of it. We are talking dollars and I don't know if the businesses realize that. It won't be for free.

Ms. Lewry stated I think there needs to be a bit of clarification on the word validation. The system that we use now that we call a validation system is one where we issue these stamps. We give three of these stamps and it goes on a parking ticket. The business owners buy these stamps right now at half price and they give them out to their customers. Not too many people, frankly, are using this program. It was called the Shoppers Park Free Program five years ago when we got this thing started at a time when there weren't any stores even downtown and there was hardly any business downtown and everybody was complaining that the reason there was no business was because we had a parking problem. We put this in place and I think the garages will verify that it is rarely used but it is there so I would suggest that we keep it there for those businesses that would like to do it. I don't think it is costing the City very much money because it is not used very much and it is a benefit if an employer wants to offer some tickets to the customer. It is a nice gesture so I would urge that you keep that in place. The other type of validation is one that you can have that is just a rubber stamp. If I go to Margaritas and I go up to pay my bill they can stamp my parking ticket.

Mr. Robinson stated somebody has to pay for that rubber stamp. That rubber stamp is not for free.

Ms. Lewry stated if we could have all of the businesses buy their rubber stamps with their insignia on it...

Mr. Robinson interjected how do we get the revenue.

Ms. Lewry stated the customer will be paying the per hour rate. It won't be free.

Alderman Lopez stated we need some clarification. Are we saying that the validation program remains in effect at Canal and Victory and let's take 6 PM out of there. Is that what we are doing?

Chairman Sysyn replied instead of saying 6 PM, you should just say continue the validation program as is at Canal and Victory. That is how the motion should read.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated the only thing I want to clarify is whether or not the City wants to continue the...the businesses are purchasing those stickers at 25 cents an hour. Is that the fee that you want to charge the businesses for those stickers?

Alderman Lopez asked can we make that recommendation now.

Deputy Clerk Johnson answered yes. It can stay at 25 cents or you can have them pay more.

Chairman Sysyn stated and this is only available to retailers.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked do we have any idea how much of that is being used. We have heard testimony that it is virtually not being used at all.

Chairman Sysyn stated I use about 100 stickers a year.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked do we have any idea how many are used overall.

Mr. Fortin answered during the busy season I probably use 100 a week.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated so you want us to word a validation program as it exists now and let it run right through until 8 PM at night.

Alderman Pariseau moved to approve the validation program as stated above.
Alderman Vaillancourt duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Lopez asked Dave if he could keep control of all of the revenue, etc.

Mr. Waldecker answered yes.

Alderman Levasseur asked if someone tries to use a validation sticker after 8 PM they can't use it.

Chairman Sysyn answered no. The stores are closed at 8 PM.

Alderman Levasseur stated well if the store closes at 8 PM and the guy goes over to Margaritas and comes out at 10 PM and uses his validation sticker can he do that or no.

Mr. Waldecker replied I think the 8 PM deadline is geared more towards not letting anybody else in after that.

Alderman Levasseur asked what do you mean.

Chairman Sysyn stated they only get three hours of validation. That is all they can get.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated we don't want somebody using those stickers and really going to the civic center instead or we are going to lose a lot of revenue.

Chairman Sysyn called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Mr. Lolicata addressed Item F stating the Traffic Department will insure that there are signs stating that parking garages are open or full, which we were talking about before so the public can see it similar to what the Airport does. This will take effect as soon as possible.

On motion of Alderman Hirschmann, duly seconded by Alderman Pariseau, it was voted to approve Item F.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated we have a change on Item G from the Clerk's side. It says, "Early Bird after 6 PM garage fees" and it says "ordinance passed" and it wasn't an ordinance it was just a committee report. It is a combination of regulations and policies that the Board adopted and I just want to clarify that.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez it was voted to approve Item G and delete the word "ordinance."

Ms. Lewry stated I realize that you passed Item E before Hal got a chance to speak and I did try to give Hal Jordan from the YMCA an opportunity to speak earlier and you asked if he could hold off until Item E and then you went right through Item E without allowing Hal an opportunity to speak. I think there was one more thing that we needed to talk about when we talk about the garage program. Can Hal have the floor? It is about the other constituency that uses our downtown and those are the constituents that compose our non-profit organizations who need to have some consideration in our overall strategies.

Mr. Hal Jordan stated I want to applaud you for your work so far. The 6 PM free on non-civic center nights and on the weekend is great. On a typical Saturday we have somewhere around 750 kids that come to the YMCA for basketball, wrestling, swim lessons, etc. and that is going to help us immensely so I appreciate that. The other thing we had talked about in our meeting beforehand is there are a number of civic center events that are going to be presented to us as our constituents come in are really going to be problematic. We hoped that for the YMCA, the YWCA and the Palace you might consider doing another type of validation program that would be free for non-profits in the downtown area on civic center nights to help us attract long-term people that come in every week. Every week on a Tuesday or Thursday night we might have 100 kids coming in for swim lessons and obviously that is going to be tough for the parents and the kids. We just speak on behalf of the kids from Manchester who are here every week. If there is any way on Saturdays as well...I don't know when the timing is for the civic center events on Saturday.

Chairman Sysyn replied on Saturdays we are allowing a few hours before the civic center that the kids can go in. We did that for the YMCA.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated kids aren't driving. They are being driven there.

Mr. Jordan replied they come in as families. The mothers and fathers often times come in also.

Alderman Levasseur asked can't they use their YMCA card as their validation card.

Mr. Waldecker answered that is difficult to audit.

Alderman Pariseau stated quite frankly I think the City already does enough for non-profit entities.

Chairman Sysyn stated I think what you need to do is come in with a different proposal at a later date. Let's see how it works first. There might be some times when you have something and the Palace has something and the civic center has something. The bank has taken away the Palace Theatres free parking I believe also. I think what you can do is after a month or so submit some kind of a proposal and we can look at it.

Mr. Jordan stated perhaps when we see what the Canal Street load is if not many people are parking there maybe it could be free all the time.

Chairman Sysyn replied right and I don't think a lot of people are going to use it.

Alderman Levasseur asked Citizens took away the free parking for the Palace. Are they going to rent the spaces now?

Chairman Sysyn answered on civic center event nights yes. They are going to charge \$7 I think. David is going to run that and it is prepay.

Alderman Levasseur asked is that a City parking lot.

Chairman Sysyn answered no.

Alderman Levasseur asked so they are going to charge \$7.

Mr. Waldecker answered I don't know what they are going to charge yet.

Alderman Hirschmann asked can someone reiterate what the plan is for the lot we are leasing to McQuades. We only enforce that until 5 PM so what is going to happen from 5 PM on in that lot?

Mr. Robinson answered initially I had suggested that they use that lot for government parking because there will be nights when there are Aldermanic meetings or what have you as well as a civic center event. To me that is the perfect place for government parking.

Alderman Hirschmann asked can we make a motion on that.

Alderman Levasseur stated you don't need the whole parking lot.

Alderman Hirschmann moved that the Middle Street Parking Lot be used for government parking from 5 PM on.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked how many spaces are in there.

Mr. Lolicata answered 66.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated we don't need 66 spaces.

Deputy Clerk Johnson replied you have Planning Board and Zoning Board hearings and that parking lot is full frequently.

Chairman Sysyn asked how would you control that.

Alderman Hirschmann stated from 5 PM on I don't know how you would police that. We have security guards.

Chairman Sysyn asked do we have enough security guards to police that, Carol.

Deputy Clerk Johnson answered I don't know.

Lt. Lussier stated my understanding is that right now McQuades has somebody monitoring their half of the lot.

Deputy Clerk Johnson replied only until 3 PM.

Alderman Hirschmann stated if we don't close that loophole, somebody is going to park there to go to the hockey games.

Alderman Pariseau duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Levasseur asked why don't you make Stark Street design...you have Stark Street right around the corner. Leave that parking lot. It is closer to the civic center and you have restaurants around there. If you take Stark Street you could designate those spots for government spaces.

Alderman Hirschmann answered those are meters.

Alderman Levasseur stated well those are meters in that parking lot too. You have all of the spaces along Stark Street. I don't think you should take that parking lot, at least not yet.

Alderman Pariseau moved to table this item. Alderman Vaillancourt duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Lopez asked if there are no meetings here then what happens.

Alderman Vaillancourt answered that is the point. That is why we moved to table this.

Chairman Sysyn called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated the Veteran's Parade Committee needs an answer as to whether or not it is okay to close the streets and we have a couple of other items that we did not put on the agenda.

Deputy Clerk Johnson passed out the memorandum from the Police Department regarding changing parking.

Alderman Pariseau stated we got this the day of the Board meeting. It has to go back to the full Board and be referred to this Committee.

Deputy Clerk Johnson replied no it doesn't. We no longer place referrals to committees on the Board agenda. That is a policy that the Board adopted.

Alderman Pariseau asked so why was this distributed last Tuesday.

Deputy Clerk Johnson answered I believe the Mayor's Office distributed it, not the Clerk. Maybe you want to ask them. I can't control what the Mayor's Office decides to introduce. The Mayor has the right to introduce stuff as a member of the Board. This is a communication from the Police Department and they are requesting parking changes in the area of the Police Department, specifically on Merrimack Street they are looking for one hour parking for the public while on police business only. They are also requesting that three parking spaces be changed to parking for police vehicles only.

Chairman Sysyn stated they would like to get this through before the civic center opens.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked what is the Traffic Director's recommendation.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated I think Lt. Lussier can explain it better.

Lt. Lussier stated if you look at the diagram on the last page that says current, that lays out the way the parking is at this time. Right now we have parking for police vehicles and what we are doing is hoping to increase the parking spaces for police

vehicles, not my personal vehicle. We currently have spaces for 25 police vehicles. If you go to the proposed plan, I guess the bulk of it is along Manchester Street, along the north side of the Fire Department's parking lot. We would like to take those...right now there are 11 two-hour meters there. We want to convert those to parking for police vehicles only. Along Merrimack Street currently there are three spots on the south side of the Police Station.

Alderman Lopez stated so the three parking spaces are for the public and they don't pay anything.

Lt. Lussier replied right.

Alderman Lopez asked but the meters on the other side...

Mr. Paul Beaudoin interjected there are no meters. He misspoke. They are two-hour time zones.

Alderman Lopez responded so they don't pay anything there.

Mr. Beaudoin replied no.

Alderman Lopez asked what is your traffic at the Police Station.

Lt. Lussier answered more than those three spots. We have people coming in on their lunch breaks for pistol permits, making reports, people visiting detectives and the juvenile division. There is a traffic flow there. Those three spots are not adequate.

Alderman Lopez replied I am just thinking that without any place for them to go park on their lunch hour just to go in and do something or pay their ticket or whatever the case may be...

Lt. Lussier stated we are actually giving them more spaces.

Alderman Lopez stated you have the three spaces on Merrimack Street that you want to...

Lt. Lussier interjected if you look on the proposed plan...

Alderman Lopez interjected if you would answer my question directly I will understand.

Lt. Lussier stated I am trying to answer it.

Alderman Lopez stated the three spaces on Merrimack Street you want for police vehicles.

Lt. Lussier replied yes.

Alderman Lopez stated so that eliminates me going there to park and pay a ticket.

Chairman Sysyn stated they are going to give you another place to park.

Alderman Lopez asked and you are going to move me to where.

Lt. Lussier answered Chestnut Street.

Alderman Lopez asked how many spaces.

Lt. Lussier answered seven.

Alderman Lopez asked how much revenue are we going to lose.

Mr. Lolicata stated six or seven meters times \$4/day.

Alderman Hirschmann stated I would move it because it is going to help the police and it is going to give the public free parking to go to the Police Station.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to approve this request.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated the next item is closure of streets for the Veteran's Day Parade.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Hirschmann, it was voted to approve the request.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated the last item is a letter from the Dean of UNH-Manchester. They are looking for reserved parking for an event that is going on down there. They want to utilize the Arms Lot.

Alderman Hirschmann stated they already lease spaces down there.

Deputy Clerk Johnson replied they are merely trying to take 50 spaces for one night in the Arms Lot, which is not utilized anyway. I spoke with the Traffic

Director and he felt that he could accommodate it if he worked with the businesses because they don't want it until 5 PM.

Alderman Lopez moved to approve the request. Alderman Pariseau duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Hirschmann stated you are going to have the people at the Cotton Club upset with you.

Mr. Lolicata replied they have their own parking. Cotton uses their spots after 5 PM and on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights the other people can utilize the inside. There is plenty of room.

Alderman Hirschmann stated the college already leases half the spaces down there.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated they are playing Dartmouth at the civic center and they are doing some kind of special party at the college before hand.

Alderman Hirschmann stated by doing this...you are having an event at the civic center and you aren't going to have any revenue because you are giving it all away. When you have events at the civic center you are supposed to get revenue. I am opposing this.

Alderman Pariseau stated but they are increasing the revenues because they are using the Verizon Wireless Arena for this game. It is an inaugural event.

Chairman Sysyn called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried with Chairman Sysyn casting the deciding vote.

Alderman Levasseur stated what is happening right now is residents are starting to get to see what is going on. Cars are coming down. As you know we gave resident parking over behind the civic center and I think we did a good job doing that. Now we are getting requests from other streets. Amherst Street, Manchester Street and all of these little streets now are going to get creamed with all of these parking spaces and now especially on the night of a civic center event if it was a snow night you could park over at Citizen's Bank until 7 AM. They are going to take that away. We need to get something going for more resident parking on these extra streets where people live. I won't ask you for a vote. I will put it in a letter. We do resident parking on some streets and I think we are going to have to add a few more in.

Chairman Sysyn asked can we refer this to Tom Lolicata and Lt. Lussier.

Lt. Lussier stated I have heard a lot of people say let's wait and see what happens. I think that is one we should wait on. I don't have that much faith in that. Those people in that neighborhood, we are asking them to obtain permits and display them and not to have company. I think we are going to run into a lot of complaints and a lot of trouble with that. Before we jump on adding more streets, I would like to see what happens.

Chairman Sysyn asked Alderman Levasseur to send a letter.

Alderman Levasseur stated there are people right now on West Merrimack Street and along all of these streets here that can park there and have been doing it and putting stickers in their windows. Most people have parking in the alleys. We are lucky in this area but if go down Elm Street and start heading east, we run into the fact that there is no parking behind the buildings. We have a problem here. Are we going to attract people to come and live down here and tell them that they can't park or are we going to invite people from Massachusetts and other states to come and park here for three and four hours and kick out our residents? I am lucky. I am out of here in a two months. You guys are going to have to wrestle with this. I just want to let you know that this is what is coming up.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee